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## Office of Tribal Government Relations Newsletter ~ March 2015

### Note from the Director

Greetings and welcome to the March edition of the VA Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR) newsletter. Spring has finally arrived in our Nation's Capital and the blooming plants and budding trees are a welcome sight. We are pleased to announce that this past month two tribes, the Ute Indian Tribe and the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation signed Native American Direct Loan (NADL) MOUs with the VA – Veteran's Benefits Administration. In April, the Mescalero Apache Tribe will also sign an MOU for the NADL program. The NADL program provides the opportunity for Veterans living in Indian Country to acquire VA loans for the construction or purchase of a primary residence. We are very excited to see tribes express interest in this program and look forward to receiving pictures and stories of how Veterans and their families are achieving the dream of home ownership. For more information about this program, email [tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov](mailto:tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov).

The OTGR team members have been busy this winter and are now taking time to make plans for the spring. Looking ahead to April, the Veterans 2015 – Service for Veterans conference, co-hosted by the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs and the OTGR will be held in Anacortes, Washington April 17-18, 2015. This is an excellent opportunity for tribal leaders, Veterans and Veteran service providers to learn more about information and services available to Veterans from a wide range of federal, state, Veterans service organizations and non-profit partners. Swinomish Tribal Chairman Brian Cladoosby will be on hand to welcome attendees and we're also pleased that our VA Deputy Assistant Secretary David Montoya will also be present to offer a national update on VA's efforts to strengthen partnerships with tribal governments. Registration information can be found on our website, [www.va.gov/tribalgovernment](http://www.va.gov/tribalgovernment) or email [Terry.Bentley@va.gov](mailto:Terry.Bentley@va.gov). I'd like to give a warm "shout out" to OTGR Tribal Government Relations Specialist Terry for her leadership in working collaboratively with our tribal and state partners to coordinate this event for our tribes and Veterans.

We are pleased to announce that the Oklahoma City (OKC) VA Medical Center (VAMC) is offering "spring training" for Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal Health Programs on April 23, 2015 from 9 am to 2:30 pm in the Chase Auditorium. Thanks to the VAMC leadership, Ms. Candy Klumpp, OKC VAMC Nurse Navigator, Majed Ibrahim of the Veteran's Health Administration Chief Business Office and Mary Culley, OTGR Tribal Government Relations Specialist for helping coordinate this event which provides an excellent opportunity for hands on technical assistance that will support implementation of the Reimbursement Agreements between the VA, IHS and Tribal Health Programs.

Also, happening on April 23, 2015, is the Hopi Code Talker's Recognition Day Event schedule to be held from 10 am to 2 pm in Kykotsmovi, Arizona. For more information about this event, please call (928) 734-3462. Veterans, members of the military and the public are invited to attend this event which is an impressive and inspiring honoring for the Hopi Code Talkers.

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Another highlight during the month of April is the 2015 Tribal Self-Governance Annual Consultation Conference. Dr. Linda Schwartz, VA Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning, is scheduled to deliver plenary remarks during the session. VA leadership and colleagues will also be on hand to offer a workshop focused on the VA/IHS MOU and the variety of opportunities that exist for partnerships between tribes and the VA. For more information about this event, check out the website at [www.tribalselfgov.org](http://www.tribalselfgov.org).

Last but not least, I'd like to close with a request of our readers. We are seeking stories and examples from Indian Country of how Native Youth volunteer their time and efforts towards honoring Veterans in their local communities. Whether through art, music, hosting school events and functions, or volunteering through local service providers, we are interested in capturing and celebrating in those important efforts. I've learned so much from Veterans in my family as well as all of the amazing Veterans we've had the privilege to serve these past many years, and I know our youth have as well. Please don't hesitate to email those stories and suggestions to our [tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov](mailto:tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov) address. We look forward to hearing from you.

Happy Spring and Happy Reading,

Stephanie

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie L. Bridwell".



## U.S. Department of Justice ~ Veteran Treatment Court Funding Available for Tribal Courts

**Need funding for your Drug Court, DWI Court, Veterans Treatment Court, Co-Occurring Court, or Tribal Healing to Wellness Court? [Deadline: April 16, 2015](#)**

Now is the time to apply for DOJ funding. The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has released its [2015 solicitation for the Drug Court Discretionary Grant program](#). This grant is available to State, Local and Tribal Governments and Courts. [The National Drug Court Institute](#) in partnership with BJA will host a webinar on March 5th at 2pm to provide an overview of the solicitation and answer your questions. [Sign up today](#) as space is limited!

[This grant](#) includes three categories:

### **1) Implementation: \$350,000 ~ 36 months**

Jurisdictions that have completed a substantial amount of planning and are ready to implement an evidenced-based program.

### **2) Enhancement: \$200,000 ~ 24 months**

Jurisdictions with a fully operational programs wanting to:

- expand the number of participants served that meet the existing target population description;
- expand the target population description and serve additional participants who meet the expanded description;
- enhance court operations;
- enhance court and/or supervision services; or
- enhance recovery support services

### **3) Statewide Enhancement ~ 36 months**

- Applicants may request up to \$200,000 to improve, enhance, or expand drug court services statewide by encouraging adherence to the evidence-based program principles.
- Applicants may request up to \$1,300,000 to financially support drug courts in local or regional jurisdictions which do not currently operate with BJA Adult Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program funding.

### ***Special Announcement for Veterans Treatment Courts***

There are two funding streams at DOJ for Veterans Treatment Courts:

Type A: No prohibition on violent offenders participating  
Type B: Prohibits violent offenders from participating as defined on page 4 of the solicitation. It is critical that you carefully review the solicitation to determine which funding stream you are applying under. Limited funding is available for Type A. See page 15 of the solicitation for further information.



## First Published Veteran Treatment Court Study Shows Incredible Success!



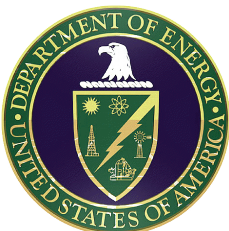
The [Community Mental Health Journal](#) has released the first published study on Veterans Treatment Court and the results are outstanding. Researchers from the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services tracked 86 veterans involved with Veterans Treatment Court, all of whom were diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). They found that 89.5% remained arrest-free during their time in the program and concluded that the veterans participating in Veterans Treatment Court experienced significant improvement with depression, PTSD and substance abuse as well as with critical social issues including housing, emotional well being, relationships, and overall functioning.

The study further concluded that [mentoring from volunteer veterans](#) is particularly effective. Veterans who received mentoring not only experienced better clinical outcomes, they reported feeling more socially connected.

“Veterans reported better treatment outcomes and quality of life over time when involved in the Vet Court,” the study states. “When provided programs and services that fostered recovery, veterans improved markedly on all study measures. Veterans particularly improved when provided a combination of trauma-specific treatment, peer mentor services, and medication. The importance of trauma-specific therapy and positive peer role models may be important for veterans with combat exposure who have re-integrated into a society unfamiliar with the struggles associated with combat experience.”

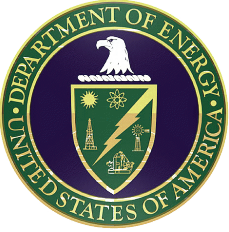
[Access the full study here.](#)

## Department of Energy Helps Military Vets and Native Americans Go Solar



Here's an article by Andrew Burger that originally ran in [Triple Pundit](#) on March 24, 2015.

The Department of Energy is zooming in on U.S. military veterans and Native Americans as the Obama administration continues its effort to spur green job creation and deployment of solar energy. On March 17, [DOE announced](#) it [offered] a free public webinar about hiring veterans for solar energy jobs as part of the president's [SunShot Initiative](#). On March 25, the DOE [Office of Indian](#)



[Energy](#) and the [Western Area Power Administration](#) [sponsored] a live webinar on tribal energy development operation and management best practices.



DOE followed up on these with [a March 18 announcement](#) that it had selected 11 Native American tribal communities to deploy energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. In total, DOE will invest nearly \$6 million “to accelerate the implementation of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies on tribal lands.” It’s expected that the DOE’s \$6 million will be supplemented by another \$7.5 million in cost share by the 11 Native American tribes.

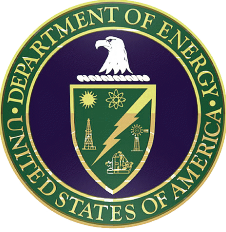
### **Vets into solar**

Numbering nearly 17,000, U.S. military veterans represent almost 10 percent of the nearly 174,000 Americans employed in the U.S. solar energy industry. And the Obama administration is working to see that figure increase. Five leading U.S. solar energy companies – SolarCity, Vivint Solar, Sunrun, SunEdison and SunPower – pledged to interview exiting military vets that graduate from a DOE solar job training pilot program.

A [first class of U.S. Marines](#) recently graduated from the pilot phase of the SunShot Initiative’s solar industry jobs training program for U.S. military vets at Camp Pendleton, California. As the Energy Department explains, the groundbreaking program prepares “service members for careers in the solar industry as solar photovoltaic system installers, sales representatives, system inspectors and other solar-related opportunities.”

DOE expects 200 military vets will graduate and be well-equipped to make the transition to civilian life by landing jobs in the solar energy industry over the course of the program’s pilot phase. In addition to Camp Pendleton, pilot-phase training programs at Fort Carson, Nevada, and Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia,





are scheduled to begin this spring.

The Energy Department is reinforcing its veterans' solar energy training program with free webinars and other public outreach initiatives. On March 18, DOE co-sponsored "Call to Action! Hire Skilled Veterans Today!." In addition to discussing "the federal government's efforts to promote the hiring of U.S. vets in the solar workforce, participants learned about vets entering the private sector, best practices in company recruiting and retention of vets, how the post-9/11 GI Bill can aid in the hiring process, and other available federal resources," the Energy Department explains.

### **Renewable energy and Native Americans**

On March 25, DOE [presented] a live webinar entitled, "Tribal Energy Development Operation and Management Best Practices." The latest public outreach effort in its [Tribal Renewable Energy Webinar Series](#), "attendees will learn the challenges and benefits of developing a tribal strategic energy plan, proven methods for fostering and growing management capabilities, and ways to ensure tribal staff and council members have access to key information in order to serve as resources for tribal leaders."

One day after announcing the webinar, the Energy Department said it would invest \$6 million in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects across a selected group of 11 Native American tribes, including Alaska Native villages. Cost-sharing on the part of the tribes is expected to bring the total value of the projects to \$13.5 million.

"The Energy Department is committed to helping Native American tribes develop clean, affordable and reliable energy options," Kathleen Hogan, deputy assistant secretary for energy efficiency at the Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs, was quoted in a press release.

Some \$41.8 million has been invested in clean energy projects on Native American tribal lands via the the DOE's [Tribal Energy Program](#), in partnership with the Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs, since 2002. "By harnessing America's clean energy on tribal lands, tribes across the country can cut energy bills, spur economic development and advance energy solutions in their local communities." A complete list and summary of the Native American tribes and projects is included in the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy's [press release](#).



## Tribal Veteran Representative (TVR) Training

Here's some information on an upcoming 5-day TVR training at Fort Harrison near Helena, MT. Contact Buck Richardson ([William.Richardson@va.gov](mailto:William.Richardson@va.gov)) – (406-447-7547) for the full agenda or more information.



Department of Veterans Affairs  
Tribal Veterans Representatives (TVR)

15<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference

April 26 – May 1 2015  
Rocky Mountain Healthcare Network (VISN19)  
Naval Reserve Center  
Ft Harrison, Montana

**Purpose:** The purpose of this knowledge-based training is to help the attendee understand the VHA-VBA-& NCA benefits, programs, and services available to the Veterans and their family members of this country. Also how to help the returning Veterans of the current Transitional Care Management (OEF/OIF/OND) conflict and engage them in current programs available to them.





## Stockbridge-Munsee Health and Wellness Center Signs Reimbursement Agreement with VA

This article, by Susan Savetwith, originally ran in the March 15, 2015 issue of *Mohican News* – and which can be found [HERE](#)



“Dignitaries from state and federal veteran’s agencies and Stockbridge-Munsee Tribal Council gathered at the Stockbridge-Munsee Health and Wellness Center to sign a Memorandum of Understanding which will allow Native American veterans to use clinic services and be covered by the VA.

Those in attendance were Stockbridge-Munsee Vice President, Greg Miller, and Council Members, Joe Miller, Jeremy Mohawk, and JoAnn Schedler; Tribal Lobbyist, Buck Martin; Joseph Zimmerman and Tim Deacy from VISN 12 Regional Office; Peter Vicaire from the Federal Office of Veterans Affairs; Michael Trepanier from the State Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mohican Veterans, Robert Little, Roger Miller, Harold Bowman. Stockbridge-Munsee Vice President, Greg Miller, said tribes have had a long history of veterans. “Our people have fought in many wars all the way back to the Hudson River and we also have an MOU with West Point. If you’ve ever seen the country there, no one would ever trade it for what we have now. It leads us to ponder, why would we participate when we don’t always get treated the best, but we are very proud of our vets. Now we have the opportunity to make our dollar go farther,” Miller said. He thanked those from the Veterans Administration and staff from the Stockbridge-Munsee Health and Wellness Center for all of their work in making clinic services available to Native American veterans. “We are very glad to sign this MOU,” Miller stated. Deputy Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Veteran’s Affairs, Michael Trepanier, said one of the main priorities of the state is to educate what the State Veteran’s Affairs Office does. He said they run services; four cemeteries, four homeless centers, and seven nursing homes. He said there are 1,300 employees. Trepanier said they take veterans services and consolidate them to make sure veterans are not left behind.

Trepanier said he was there in place of Secretary Scocos who could not make it. He read some of the comments Secretary Scocos planned to make. He said Secretary Scocos visited here and has made efforts to learn more about Native Americans and has developed relationships with various tribes. Secretary Scocos said he learned that Tribal veterans services were small budget and he has worked on it and, partly due to his efforts, the funding has tripled. Secretary Scocos said Tribal college funding has also increased. Scocos said it was also learned that tribal clinics were not recognized and this is a deficit because more Native American’s serve in the military than any other ethnic group.

Peter Vicaire from the Federal Office of Veteran’s Affairs talked briefly about the [tribal





veteran cemeteries] Federal Grants program that helps tribes. He said the tribe would have to pay out ten percent initially but they would reimburse that amount when funds are received. He said there is also a Veteran Justice Outreach and a monthly newsletter that is available to all veterans.

Tim Deacy, spoke about the new clinic in Green Bay. He said they are now up to 7800 patients. They have great services and are continuing to grow. He indicated they have a full range of services including dental, cardiology, and dialysis. "We are going to be part of the Medical College of Wisconsin; we have some psychology majors at our site and we're looking into providing other services like acupuncture and audiology. The Chicago area is the delivery system for the Wisconsin network so, we're excited to be here, we're enthusiastic to share the top services we have and always look forward to improving those services and ways to offer them more widely," Deacy said.

JoAnn Schedler thanked everyone and recognized all the veterans in attendance. "This is why we do this, for you and for your service. We need to get veterans here and get the benefits they deserve," she stated.

Bob Little thanked everyone for their hard work in making the agreement happen and said the next thing that is needing work on is PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). Buck Martin indicated work needs to be done on how elected officials are made aware of what is happening here. He said the Stockbridge-Munsee are one of the first tribes in Wisconsin to sit down with Veterans Affairs to make an agreement like this. Council Member Joe Miller said, "There is a protocol in Indian country and recognizing our vets is right up there. I agree we need to work on PTSD. It's a disqualifier for many career paths. PTSD should not be a scarlet letter; a barrier for vets." He thanked everyone on behalf of the Tribal Council and said, "It's an honor for all of us."





## Tribal Veteran Cemetery Grant

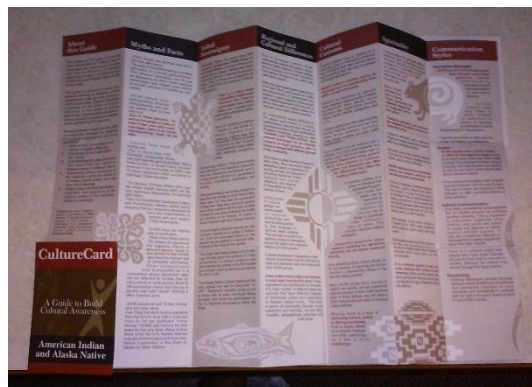
This U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs program can provide qualifying tribes with 100% development costs in providing gravesites for Veterans in those areas where VA's national cemeteries cannot fully satisfy their burial needs. Grants may be used to establish, expand or improve Veterans cemeteries. Tribes must put 10% of the amount of the grant they are seeking, which is then fully reimbursed upon awarding of the grant. Operating and maintaining the cemetery will be solely done by the tribes' funds. Over the last three years, VA has granted over \$20 million to six tribes in South Dakota, California, Arizona, and Oklahoma. Next year, four additional grant proposals may exceed \$5 million more for tribes in Montana, Oklahoma, California, and South Dakota. For more information, here's the [Grants.gov webpage](#) and here is the [VA Veterans Cemetery Grant Program page](#).



## American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Culture Card

The [American Indian and Alaska Native \(AI/AN\) Culture Card](#) promotes cultural competence among those working with AI/AN communities. SAMHSA created this concise, informative guide for non-Native service providers, disaster responders, and others interested in learning more about AI/AN cultures. The card covers topics such as cultural customs, communication styles, and regional and cultural differences to help readers fulfill the 5 elements of cultural competence:

1. Awareness and valuing of cultural differences
2. Awareness of one's own culture and values
3. Understanding of the range of dynamics that result from cross-cultural interactions
4. Cultural knowledge of the particular community served
5. Ability to adapt programs or policies to fit the cultural context



Since the Culture Card's publication 6 years ago, SAMHSA has distributed 324,894 free copies across the country.

[Order your free copies now!](#)

The SAMHSA Clearinghouse is reducing its storage footprint and would like to highlight the availability of an additional 230,000 copies of the Culture Card. SAMHSA would like to share this product with people who can use it, so please request as many copies as you would like.



## **Job Opportunity – Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs: Veterans Tribal Outreach Specialist**

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA), Division of Veterans Services, is looking to fill one Veterans Tribal Outreach Specialist (Veterans Program Specialist - Senior) position as part of the WDVA Central Office. Veterans are encouraged to apply.

Qualified veterans with a 30% or more service-connected disability are eligible for non-competitive appointment to permanent positions in classified civil service under s. 230.275, WI Stats. Visit [WiscJobsForVets](https://www.wisconsin.gov/jobs/veterans) to see this and other opportunities under this special program. Current State of Wisconsin employees are not eligible for non-competitive appointment.

**Job Duties:** Under the general supervision of the Veterans Outreach Team Supervisor, Bureau of Programs and Services, Division of Veterans Services; this position serves as department representative for the tribal governments of the federally recognized Wisconsin American Indian tribes and their respective Tribal Veterans Service Officers and tribal veterans and serves as a department representative for stakeholder outreach coordination.

Under the auspices of the Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP) position will conduct outreach efforts to veterans who are chronically homeless rural veterans and ensure they have stable housing, connect them to proper treatment and follow up to ensure that the treatment is continual and effective, providing the appropriate recovery supports to be successful. This program will focus primarily on chronically homeless veterans with a behavioral health need and secondarily on other homeless veterans with a behavioral health need.

**Special Notes:** Must be able to travel throughout the State of Wisconsin. Must be able to work non-standard work hours, including nights and weekends. Due to the nature of the position, WDVA will conduct background checks on applicants prior to selection.

The headquarter-city for this job announcement will be determined by the WDVA at the time of selection.

### **Job Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

#### **Knowledge of:**

- federal and state benefits available to veterans and their dependents.



- political, cultural, and social systems and issues of the federally recognized Wisconsin American Indian tribal governments, particularly as they relate to veterans.
- history and governmental structures of the federally recognized Wisconsin American Indian tribes.
- general military structure and practices.
- outreach and public communication principles, techniques, tools, and strategies.

**Skill in:**

- computers, including the use of email, word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software.
- problem-solving.
- negotiating with multiple individuals and groups.
- developing and maintaining cooperative working relationships.

**Ability to:**

- inform a wide range of governmental agencies, special interest groups, and individuals about veterans benefits, programs, and resources.

**How To Apply:** To be considered for this position, you will need to create an account and apply online. For instructions, refer to the following link: [\*\*How do I apply on-line and take an on-line exam?\*\*](#) You will be required to complete a civil service examination. Your responses to the exam will be used to determine your eligibility for this vacancy. Resumes may not be substituted for answering these questions. Resumes are for supplemental purposes only and will not be reviewed at this time.

If you are unable to complete the materials due to a disability or have questions regarding the examination, please contact Paul Stahmer at 608-267-7297 or [\*\*paul.stahmer@dva.wisconsin.gov\*\*](mailto:paul.stahmer@dva.wisconsin.gov).

If you encounter technical issues or need assistance using the WiscJobs system, please contact the Office of State Employment Relations at [\*\*wiscjobs@wisconsin.gov\*\*](mailto:wiscjobs@wisconsin.gov) or 608-267-1012. Application materials will be evaluated and the most qualified applicants will be invited to participate in the next step of the selection process.





## VHA – Net Worth Determinations

**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
Veterans Health Administration's Elimination of Net Worth Determinations  
Fact Sheet  
March 2015**

**Summary:**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) currently collects income and net worth (asset) information from Veterans who apply for enrollment in VA health care to determine eligibility and/or copay responsibility. To align VA's health care program with other federal health care programs' financial assessment requirements, effective January 1, 2015, VA will no longer collect Veterans' net worth information for purposes of financial assessment for health benefits.

For purposes of VA health care enrollment and benefits, VA will consider only a Veteran's previous year's gross household income (earned and unearned income), and deductible expenses to determine eligibility and/or copay responsibility. VA will continue to consider a Veteran's net worth in determining eligibility for extended care services.

Although the thresholds are the same for Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and Veterans Health Administration (VHA), there are important differences in how both administrations use net worth in determining benefits:

- VBA uses the threshold as an independent financial variable as an indication that an application for Pension may need further development.
- VHA combines the net worth with income in determining eligibility for VA health care enrollment and copay responsibility.

VHA will send letters to Veterans who have been placed in Priority Groups 7 and 8 because their net worth placed them over the VA income limits for consideration of Priority Group 5. The letter will inform Veterans they may now be eligible for enrollment in a higher priority group based solely on their previous year's gross household income, and suggest they complete and submit an enclosed VA Form 10-10EZ, Health Benefits Renewal, for consideration.

**Key Facts:**

- VA is committed to providing the best quality, safe and effective health care our Veterans have earned and deserve.
- VA continues to look for ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its exceptional health care service.
- As part of VA's commitment to providing Veterans world class health care and services, VA is discontinuing consideration of a Veteran's net worth information beginning January 1, 2015.



- This change will align VA's health care program with other federal health care program's financial assessment requirements.
- This change will positively impact approximately 53,000 Veterans the first year and it is estimated that over five years, nearly 135,000 Veterans. This change reduces paperwork burden (1010EZ/R) as reported to public through the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- This change will lessen out-of-pocket expenses for lower income Veterans.
- The change will eliminate net worth adjudication referrals to VBA.
- In March 2014, VA also eliminated the annual requirement for most VA-healthcare-enrolled Veterans to update their financial information annually to determine their eligibility for VA health benefits. VA will now automatically match income information obtained from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and Social Security Administration (SSA), reducing the burden on Veterans to keep their healthcare eligibility up to date.

## Marines' Hymn Sung in Navajo by Joe Kellwood



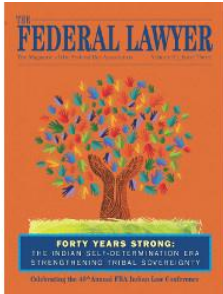
Do you want to hear the Marines' Hymn sung in Navajo? Of course you do – it's the oldest official song in the United States Armed Forces! Click on the picture to be taken to the [Youtube video](#) [0:57]



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## THE INVISIBLE FAMILIES: Child Welfare and American Indian Active Duty Servicemembers and Veterans

Here's an abstract for a law article written by Kathryn E. Fort and Peter S. Vicaire which will be in the upcoming April 2015 Issue of *The Federal Lawyer*. The seven page article can be read in its entirety [HERE](#)



“The intersection and conflict of federal law, state law, tribal law, military law, and legal ethics is inevitable in cases of voluntary adoptions and child welfare cases involving Native children from military families. In ICWA cases, Native service members can be in the unenviable position of asking a state court to apply not one but two federal laws—the ICWA and the SCRA. In addition, the absence of a service member in the life of the child, dictated by the terms of his service and by deployment, can be used by courts as contrary to the best interest of the child for permanency. Finally, once service members come home as veterans, possible injuries, especially TBI and PTSD, make them more vulnerable to the possible removal of their children. Tribes are in a particularly critical place to provide services and specialized dockets for these cases, and attorneys must be attuned to the changing landscape of the law under Adoptive Couple and how the needs of both active-duty and veterans’ families require specialized representation.

The federal government, tribes and states can address issues affecting Native military families in a number of ways discussed in this article, including:

- Kinship placement in contested adoptions put on hold due to deployment;
- Ensuring Memorandums of Understanding between military bases and states include reference to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA);
- Identifying and educating attorneys — including Judge Advocates — on both ICWA and the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act;
- Training Veteran Treatment Court judges on issues specific to Native veterans;
- Modeling specialized state Indian Child Welfare Act dockets on Veteran Treatment Courts;
- Opening conversations between child welfare courts and veterans courts, and assigning one judge per family;
- Encouraging the development of tribal court veterans treatment dockets and engaging with the Veterans Administration (VA) through Veteran Justice Outreach Specialists (VJOs).”





## PTSD Consultation Service Program for IHS and Tribal Health Service Providers



### PTSD Consultation Program FOR VA PROVIDERS

1 (866) 948-7880  
[PTSDconsult@va.gov](mailto:PTSDconsult@va.gov)  
Learn more at  
[vawww.ptsd.va.gov](http://vawww.ptsd.va.gov)



*Speak directly with staff psychologists, social workers, and physicians about:*  
**TREATMENT • CLINICAL MANAGEMENT • RESOURCES • ASSESSMENT  
REFERRALS • PROGRAMATIC ISSUES • IMPROVING CARE**

#### Who can call?

We hear from mental health professionals, primary care clinicians, social workers, peer support specialists, nurses and researchers. **ANYONE** working in the VA can ask a question or request a consultation about anything related to PTSD.

#### Who are the consultants?

The PTSD Consultation Program is staffed by experts from the National Center for PTSD and also an extended network of consultants from across the VA and beyond. Our team includes psychologists, social workers, and physicians.

Sonya Norman, PhD, Program Director  
Todd McKee, MDiv, Program Manager

#### How does it work?

##### STEP 1. CALL OR EMAIL US TO ASK A QUESTION OR REQUEST A CONSULT

It is a quick process. We just need your contact information and a brief summary of your question to match you with the best consultant.

##### STEP 2. DISCUSS YOUR QUESTIONS

We can respond to some questions via email. Phone consultations are up to 30 minutes in length, but can vary according to need. We work hard to find a time that fits in your busy schedule.

##### STEP 3. REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS & GIVE FEEDBACK

You and the consultant will review the recommendations. Later, you can provide feedback on the process.





## OTGR Western Region

(AK; CA; ID; NV; OR; WA)

### WOMEN VETS CONNECT

ALL WOMEN VETERANS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A WOMEN VETS  
CONNECT MEETING. WE ARE FORMING A SUPPORT NETWORK.

MEETING DATES:	March 28, 2015	11AM
Saturdays	April 25, 2015	11AM
	June 27, 2015	11AM

MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT THE 40 & 8 in the boxcar next to the  
chateau. It is located at 7607 NE 26<sup>th</sup> Ave. Vancouver WA. (The chateau  
is located across 78<sup>th</sup> Street from Probuild and across 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue from  
the Cowlitz Tribal Health Care Center).

Any questions contact: Dixie Lee Hotaling (360)910-8434 or  
[rebel2@comcast.net](mailto:rebel2@comcast.net).

Event sponsors: Healing On the Home Front

Pointman: Women's Outpost

LINKS

40 & 8




THE TIME IS NOW FOR WOMEN VETERANS TO CONNECT  
AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER.



## OTGR Southwest Region




(AZ; CO; NM; UT)

**2015 Hopi Code Talkers**  
*Recognition Day*



  

*"Lavayit ak Mongvasii...Life Sustained Through Language"*

**Thursday, April 23rd, 2015**  
**10:00AM—2:00PM MST**  
**Hopi Veterans Memorial Center**  
Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039

Fighter Plane - Kiisa (Hawk)      **Keynote Speaker**  
**MS. STEPHANIE BIRDWELL**  
Director for the Office of Tribal Governmental Relations






 

Ship - Paaki (Water House)      **Special Showing**  
**HOPi CODE TALKER DOCUMENTARY**      Bomb - Nohu (Egg)

**All Registrants Will Receive**  
**COMMEMORATIVE HOPi CODE TALKER PIN**  
(Limited Quantity)

**Veterans, military, and the public are invited to come join us for this event.**

Event Sponsors

**For more information on this event, call Hopi Veterans' Services:**  
**(928) 734-3462**



## **Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation sign MOU with VA**

Michael J. Frueh, left, Director of the Loan Guaranty Service for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), signs a Memorandum of Understanding between VA and the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. Ron Wopsock, Ute Indian Tribe Council Representative, right, signed on behalf of the Tribe. The Memorandum allows VA to make home loans directly to Veterans of this tribe living on tribal trust lands. The ceremony took place at Fort Duchesne, Utah on March 10. *VA photograph by Christopher Scott*







## Free Arizona State Park Passes

The Arizona State Parks agency is offering passes to veterans for day use into state parks. The passes are good for two years from the date of issue, with some restrictions. For information on all 28 state parks, trails and off-road vehicle programs and the State Historic Preservation Office, call 602-542-4174 or visit [AZStateParks.com](http://AZStateParks.com) or call 520-586-2283.

Base Camp will take place again April 3-5. The purpose of Base Camp is to provide a location for veterans and friends to assemble and share camaraderie. Live music and entertainment is provided on Saturday night. Admission is free. Base Camp has military ambiance with bunkers/fighting positions simulating a fire base or a line unit's perimeter defense camp. There is much more to this program. Call Joe at 602-509-8762 or 520-868-6777.

There are many Veterans Courts throughout the state, and they need mentors to help the veterans appearing before them. If you are interested in helping another veteran, contact John Fuller, director, Veterans Court Mentor Project, at 480-290-3996 or [www.vcmproject.org](http://www.vcmproject.org) or [jfuller@vcmproject.org](mailto:jfuller@vcmproject.org).

Free legal advice will be available for veterans and their spouses from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Disabled American Veterans facility at 954 S. 13th Ave. in Yuma on April 11. This event is sponsored by the DAV, but you do not need to be disabled to attend. Do you have a will, medical and financial power of attorney? Those and many other questions will be answered. At this clinic, you will leave with the needed documents for free. Please schedule an appointment; walk-ins will not have priority. Contact John Tokarz 480-363-6880 or [vetlegalclinic@gmail.com](mailto:vetlegalclinic@gmail.com).





# O'ODHAM VETERANS CELEBRATION SAVE THE DATE

## August 15, 2015

Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community  
Salt River Community Building  
1880 N. Longmore Rd. Scottsdale, AZ 85256  
Contact Pacer at 480-362-7490 or pacer.reina@srpmic-nsn.gov

## August 29, 2015

White Mountain Apache  
312 N Chief Avenue  
Whiteriver, AZ 85941  
Contact Dennis at 928-338-6090 / denisfaden@wmat.us

## September 12, 2015

Gila River Indian Community  
Blackwater District 1/ Multi-Purpose Bldg.  
15747 N. Shegoi Road, Coolidge AZ 85128  
Contact Doug at 602-327-5973 / djuan-vsv@gmail.com

## September 26, 2015

Tohono Odham Nation  
Desert Diamond Casino  
1100 W Pima Mine Rd, Sahuarita, AZ  
Contact Ron at 520-383-1900/ronald.homewytewa@tonation-nsn.gov

## October 10, 2015

Solomon, AZ  
Lopez—Hernandez American Legion Post #95  
2256 S. 3rd Ave Solomon, AZ 85551  
Contact Hal at 928-235-1980/halherbert8@gmail.com  
Ray at 928-965-0785/reaipac@hotmail.com



## OTGR Central Region

(IA; MI; MN; MT; ND; NE; SD; WI; WY)



Office of  
Tribal Government  
Relations

**VETERANS BENEFIT FAIR**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**JUNE 4, 2015**

**LAC COURTE OREILLES CASINO AND  
CONVENTION CENTER  
HAYWARD, WI**





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## OTGR Southern Plains Region

(KS; OK; TX )

### SAVE THE DATE

#### SMVF Resource Speed Sharing

(Service Members, Veterans & Families)

Thursday, May 21, 2015  
Great Plains Technology Center  
4500 W. Lee Blvd. Lawton, OK 73505  
Building 100 Room 118  
10:00 am – 1:00 pm

A half-day event inviting resources across Oklahoma to participate and share information about their organization specific to assistance for Oklahoma Service Members, Veterans, and Families offered at NO COST!

- Interested participants will be given 3 minutes to share what their organization has to offer SMVF.
- All registrants will also be provided a resource table for networking following the sharing.
- A resource list with contact information of all in attendance will be distributed.

Hosted by the Veteran Peer Mentor State Network (VPMSN) as partnered agencies, & the Great Plains Technology Center.

For information contact [Kerry.Mucker@odmhsas.org](mailto:Kerry.Mucker@odmhsas.org) (405) 365-7549